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AMERICAN PARTICIPATION IN THE NATO MULTINATIONAL CORPS: Challenge, Organization, Interoperability and C2

BY

Lieutenant Colonel John O. Welch
United States Army

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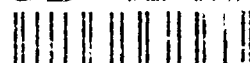
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The demise of the Soviet empire has required a reassessment of the security structures which have guided Western Europe through forty years of Cold War confrontation. The London and Rome Declarations have chartered a course for NATO that recognizes an end to the monolithic threat of the Soviet Union, a need to redirect strategic concepts, and the complementary role of other security forums. NATO elected to rely increasingly on multinational forces as a military tool of economy and solidarity. American military participation in the multinational arena needs to be studied carefully. The issues to work are not simple. The multinational corps, presently envisioned by NATO, is based on a political and not a military imperative; therefore, military credibility is an adjunct to political relevance. Multinationality poses many challenges at the operational level of war. The questions of organizational structure are manifold. Interoperability is an old subject in the Alliance that will take on added significance and complexity as multinationalism is extended below the Army Group. Command and control will not only be an issue of technological compatibility, but will also encompass the cultural differences of allies in speech and thought at the tactical level of war. The time has come for a serious approach to true multinational forces in NATO, but the journey will be neither quick nor easy.

USAWC MILITARY STUDIES PROGRAM PAPER

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Challenge, Organization, Interoperability and C2

AN INDIVIDUAL STUDY PROJECT

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AMERICAN PARTICIPATION IN THE NATO MULTINATIONAL CORPS:

Challenge, Organization, Interoperability and C2

I. INTRODUCTION

Mikhail Gorbachev's repudiation of the Breshnev Doctrine in 1989 is singularly responsible for unleashing the unbelievable chain of events that swept away the former Soviet empire. To demonstrate its continuing relevance, NATO has begun to reassess its political and military roles in the wake of this unfolding drama. Seeking to demonstrate alliance solidarity and flexibility to a wide array of uncertainty, NATO now plans a preference to rely on the multinational corps as an instrument of power. The concept of a multinational corps not only has a great deal of political appeal but also breaks the mold on formulas that have guided the alliance for over forty years.

Political, not military, necessity drives the movement towards greater multinationalism in NATO. Therefore, this paper first addresses NATO's transitional role in Europe and analyzes the political factors that have lead to multinationalism as the choice for military structure. Military forces serve the aims of their political institutions; therefore, the paper then turns to examine three fundamental concerns that will challenge military thinkers to make multinationalism a viable concept on the battlefield.

First NATO must develop organizational concepts that establish

responsibilities to support the integration and cohesiveness of the force. The multinational corps must be structured so that it not only achieves its political objectives but also maintains credibility as a combat force. Interoperability is the second concern. This concept is fundamental to multinationalism, but the alliance has long chased this elusive goal with mixed results. Lastly, combined operations will magnify the stress on the commander's ability to exercise command and control. Therefore, command, control, and communications systems must be carefully studied to achieve an architecture that is compatible and responsive. This paper will develop these issues through pragmatic approaches to the political necessity and tactical implications of commitment to multinational corps.

Multinationalism is being integrated into all three echelons of NATO's tiered defensive strategy. The Immediate Reaction Force has historically been a multinational organization as represented by the Allied Mobile Force. However, multinational corps are being embraced in the British-led Rapid Reaction Force and in the corps of the Main Defense Force. However this paper will focus on American participation and leadership of a multinational corps in the central region. Even if a third American division is removed from Europe, this paper assumes that political interests on both sides of the Atlantic will support continued American leadership of a multinational corps.

II. NATO IN TRANSITION

NATO is an alliance in transition. Its role will be defined by both political and socio-economic factors that are reshaping Europe. The unprecedented political upheaval in the East has stripped away NATO's traditional enemies and replaced them with uncertainty and instability as vague threats to security. While the political relevance of NATO can be challenged in the absence of a unitary threat, the member states still seem to see NATO as a proven formula for success and an instrument of change in Europe. The fall of the Wall, the unification of Germany and the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact have caused nations in the Alliance to reexamine their active force structure levels. Therefore, this transformation is causing a fundamental shift in the political and military basis of NATO as it seeks to articulate a re-defined European security framework.¹

The social and economic costs of the Cold War have also placed great pressures on the alliance to change. Competing needs are anxiously awaiting savings from smaller national armed forces and predictable reductions in NATO infrastructure. Foreign armies have maintained a high profile in Europe for almost fifty years. Europeans, the Germans in particular, are less willing to accept obtrusive training activities, military use of desirable real estate, and environmental risks posed by the maintenance of large armies. Residual foreign forces must be able to show themselves as an integral multinational partner in order to retain host support for their continued presence.² Thus NATO must create a

multinational force that meets its political objectives but retains credible force--one that can project power within a range of flexible response.

This multinational force must develop in the context of the evolving political and security structures in Europe. The threat must be defined. It will certainly not be the type of threat which the alliance has faced since 1949. A threat exists, but will the rush to cash in peace dividends lead to recognition of the age-old mistake of assuming peace is at hand? Likewise, the role of the United States in Western European security affairs must be questioned. What are the interests of the United States? Will the United States continue to be welcomed? These issues are central to the question of a multinational military structure in NATO.

a. The Changing Threat

NATO's traditional strategy sought to prevent war through collective defense and a doctrine of flexible response which afforded the alliance appropriate countermeasures to deter or contain aggression. That strategy, updated during the November 1991 Rome Summit, now reflects a fundamental transition which recognizes new threats, the complementary role of other political forums in Europe and a downsizing of standing military forces.³ Many argue that the absence of an aggressive Soviet empire will eventually eliminate the need for a continued military alliance. Such sanguine thinking lacks both historic perspective and a strategic vision of Europe. In a 19th century version of Murphy's Law, Benjamin Disraeli reminded us to expect the

unexpected: "rather than the contingency we plan for, it is the unexpected that usually occurs".⁴ New threats will emerge from a much wider political continuum, but history assures us that tension and conflict will eventually disrupt harmonious interims. Change brings fear and uncertainty; rapid change produces unpredictability and irrational actions. These are classic elements in the roots of war.⁵

Although NATO no longer faces its traditional threat of echeloned Warsaw Pact armor, the removal of this threat does not mean the horizon is void of conflict or emerging security issues. In fact, the uncertainties of the short term future provide the most practical basis on which to build a case for force structure in NATO.⁶ Uncertainty and the need for a viable force posture may well be viewed in the following three contexts: direct threats, ethnic self deterministic conflict, and an out-of-sector role.

The probability of a direct threat against the borders of NATO is not great in the immediate future. Political events in the East and a history of conflict with the Middle East however cannot be ignored as eventual dangers. As the Confederation of Independent States and the nations of Eastern Europe work to form representative governments and market economies, there is less likelihood of renewed aggressive interests. Nevertheless, a great danger lies in the adventurism, chaos, or irrationality that might emerge from reactionary elements in the Soviet Union if political and economic reforms fail.⁷ We saw a glimpse of this danger in the coup attempt of August 1991, which fortunately

failed through poor planning. Likewise, in the South, economic, religious, and ethnic tensions abound in North Africa and the Middle East as pressure points against the collective national interests of NATO countries. Our American perspective does not fully appreciate the 1000-year conflict between a Christian Europe and a Muslim Middle East. In fact, the potential for future conflict increases as religious fundamentalism and economic and social problems grow in many Muslim nations. The growing population of Muslims seeking economic opportunities in Europe, coupled with a declining population in many Western European countries cannot be ignored as a potential flashpoint for international relations. Although Europe is not under any direct military threat, history assures us that political, social or economic events will eventually rise up and challenge the peace of Europe.

Political change is re-igniting ethnic self-determination, held in check since the First World War. The current map of Europe reflects wars and treaties that have carved artificial political borders across Europe and the Middle East. The conflict in Yugoslavia, Georgia, and between Armenia and Azerbaijan speak to the danger of nationalistic, ethnic and religious shadows cast over all of Europe. The situation is explosive as nationalistic interests of ethnic groups compete to achieve self determination. The danger to NATO rests in the spillover of conflict and the formation of hostile political powers with objectives counter to NATO interests.

Finally, NATO must consider possible responses to threats

outside of Europe. Although Article VI of NATO's Charter restricts the operational area of NATO forces, the recent events of the Gulf War have shown that security can be endangered without a direct attack on Alliance borders. The 1991 Rome Declaration has recognized that "Alliance security must take account of the global context"⁸ This seems to reflect a movement towards acknowledging a role for NATO in out-of-sector threats to its security. This question is tied to the evolving structure of security organizations within Europe. Will NATO adjust its stand on out-of-area missions or will European states see an advantage in the options that an independent defense pillar provides them? Although a strong Western European Union can be seen by some as an indirect threat to the position of the United States at the European table, NATO and the WEU have shown a very complementary role over the past three years in the Gulf. It is yet to be determined if NATO would eventually reconsider the language of Article VI or define a complementary role with the Western European Union to prosecute out-of-sector military actions. NATO's relevance will certainly be tested by its ability to evolve effective response mechanisms to a new continuum of threat.

b. The United States in NATO

The principal Western response to the events unfolding behind the former Iron Curtain has been NATO's July 1990 London and November 1991 Rome Declarations; they offer the best signal of a post-Cold War direction for the Alliance. Although NATO has consistently sought to deter military aggression, NATO's strength

has always rested on a unity of political purpose which complements its military posture.⁹ Therefore, the London and Rome Declarations are important because they articulate continued political resolve to project consensus on a format for European security. While the Allies declared solemnly that NATO and the Soviet Union were no longer adversaries, the London Declaration signals a need to realign the structure and composition of its military forces.¹⁰ In consonance with the direction of the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe Treaty (CFE) and domestic pressures to reduce military budgets, the Declaration states:

NATO will field smaller and restructured active forces. These forces will be highly mobile and versatile so that Allied leaders will have maximum flexibility in deciding how to respond to a crisis. It will rely increasingly on multinational corps made up of national units.¹¹

Any discussion of potential American participation in multinational formations must first consider America's role in the future of Europe. Political leaders in Europe continue to call for American presence and participation in the collective defense of Europe. As we continue our relationship, we should pause and ask what each side has to gain with a future NATO. The pragmatists on both sides cite the demonstrated success of NATO; thus they are unwilling, even in the absence of a looming threat, to abandon a successful formula. Certainly for the foreseeable future, Europeans view a continued American presence as proof of a commitment as well as a historically stabilizing influence on the Continent. The American perspective itself echoes these sentiments. Our ethnic and cultural ties with Europe also

strongly motivate us to participate in broader European affairs. In more selfish terms, the United States cannot discount the leverage NATO provides for pursuing economic interests and maintaining a platform for unilateral or alliance force projection.

Europeans have long welcomed the stability and protection of American participation in continental security affairs. As the need for the nuclear umbrella loses its relevance, will Europeans continue to view American participation in the same light? President Bush has challenged European leaders to tell us "if...your ultimate aim is to provide independently for your defense".¹² There has not been any indication to date that Europeans are ready to go it alone. In fact, Robert Levine of the Rand Corporation speaks to what he sees as the central issue of continued acceptance of the United States in European security affairs. He states that continued American participation remains essential primarily for political rather than military reasons. Europeans see the United States as the honest broker in the Alliance system. Without the United States there would be no NATO. The separate nations would have to plan independent security postures, to include plans against each other. He contends that the military alliance, as cemented by American membership, is needed to prevent renewed and renascent fears.¹³ In effect he argues that NATO with American participation is essential to avoid the nationalistic suspicions, secret alliances, and balances of power that Europe has experienced, resulting in centuries of recurrent warfare.

III. MULTINATIONAL CONCEPTS AND ORGANIZATION

a. Historical Perspective

As NATO looks for the military means to best achieve political ends, we all should recognize that multinational operations must be approached very carefully. History offers constant reminder of the dangers and inefficiencies of multinational operations.¹⁴ Wellington, in a successful example, understood the dangers at Waterloo when he personally rode the battlefield to position units and give direction to his multinational commanders.¹⁵ The early experiences of the Allies in World War II had a direct impact on their later approach to multinational operations. Important in these early days of combined warfare was the decision to segregate missions to purely national headquarters. True multinational staffs were formed only above army group level.

As successful as our formulas for command in World War II proved to be, there were still important differences in national perspectives and pride that footnoted the entire history of the war. Nations approach war with different styles. American commanders were often frustrated at the timidity of British offensive actions. The British outlook on battle however was clearly influenced by their sacrifices on Flanders Fields and manpower shortages that made them reluctant to expend infantry without the advantage of overwhelming force. National pride also placed great importance on being part of the main attack, which

was viewed as the route to victory. No nation wanted to be viewed as the lesser participant.¹⁶ This phenomenon resurfaced in the Gulf War. British political influence precipitated a late change to the battle plan that moved the British 1st Armored Division from the supporting to the main attack. In addition, the history of multinational command relationships are often characterized by mistrust. Subordinate national units often feel that their freedom of action has been too tightly restricted by a superior commander of a different nation. Thus both Mark Clark and Bernard Montgomery chafed under the perceived restrictions placed on them by senior commanders from another nation. These Anglo-American examples point to the complexity of combined operations even between nations with a common language and similar cultures. NATO's desire to transition to multinational corps must be prepared to address the real and perceived problems of integrating military command.¹⁷

Yet NATO is not inexperienced in the realm of multinational operations. It has succeeded as a multinational entity from its political and military councils down to the Army Group and Allied Tactical Air Force level. NATO has mounted some commendable multinational efforts. Solidarity is currently demonstrated in multinational standing naval squadrons that have operated in the Atlantic and Baltic Approaches and a new Standing Naval Force Mediterranean is being formed. Additionally, NATO AWACS aircraft operate with multinational crews to serve the integrated air defense effort of Western Europe. The Allied Mobile Force-Land, on call as an eleven nation reaction force to threats on NATO's

flanks, offers the principal example of multinational land forces operating in a mutually supporting environment. While these units continue to perform well and provide many insights into multinational operations, the insular missions of these formations do not compare with the task of organizing, controlling and supporting a multinational corps.

b. The Challenge of Multinationalism

It would be a mistake to approach the formation of multinational corps as a routine task organization problem. Such an effort should represent a true commitment by the participating nations to form an organization that is capable of executing assigned missions. The commitment must involve more than developing plans and earmarking forces. This approach may work in a single-nation force, but it will fail given the complexity of multinational formations. Exercises will take on an even more important role to sort out the special problems of bringing multinational forces together. The paradox is that more exercises will be needed, but they must compete with the drawdown of forces and questions from a public that expects fewer training events. Unlike NATO naval and air forces, the land forces typically operate in national enclaves which do not readily lend themselves to multinationalism.¹⁸ Our best and most recent experiences during REFORGER exercises have faded as VII Corps furled its flag.¹⁹ The task is complex. It must accommodate overt and subtle differences among nations that can not be solved with an organizational template. Our approach to working the problems of multinationalism will rightly tend to focus on

procedures, equipment, responsibilities, and support issues; however, this approach must not neglect the differences that people and their cultures bring to the integration of military operations.²⁰

In this vein, certain organizational principles should be observed in the formation of a multinational corps. First, the organization must be truly multinational. Within the ability of a nation to contribute, each must be given a meaningful role in the coalition. Solidarity will quickly evaporate if a nation does not feel it has been assigned a meaningful responsibility or if they believe that their voice is not considered in coalition deliberations.²¹ Second is a basic military tenet, keep the organizational structure uncomplicated. When national command is transferred to operational command in war, there must be a clear unity of command. Likewise multinationalism should not be forced into a unit simply to show two flags. The inherent strengths, weaknesses, and internal operating systems of a nation must be analyzed to reach the proper organizational decisions.

c. Battlefield Environment

Whether his forces are national or multinational, the future commander can expect to campaign across a nonlinear battlefield. The speed, accuracy, and lethality of modern weapons have led us to expect this, but anticipated force to space ratios in Europe will certainly assure it. Success will be measured by a commander's ability to adjust to changing conditions on the battlefield. Flexibility will be stressed as commanders seek to mount synchronized joint operations to ensure favorable terms on

the battlefield.²² The commander will be sorely challenged on the future battlefield to exercise command and control of even a well-trained force. Successful battle orders must fully reflect a commander's intent, assimilate supporting commander's thoughts and actions, allow for unspecified initiatives and thus prepare the way for timely synchronized operations.²³ Initiative, agility, depth and synchronization as principle characteristics of success on the battlefield will require unity of effort built on training and habitual relationships.²⁴ This points out the crux of the multinational commanders' dilemma: he must gain unity of effort with forces that speak different languages, come from different cultures, and operate differently on the battlefield. Crafting a multinational corps calls for an organization that reflects its political charter but that also fields a viable combat force.

d. Corps Organization

The corps headquarters in multinational operations will retain the basic roles and missions it would perform in a solely national configuration. It will create and maintain the conditions for the success of the current battles and set up the conditions for the success of future battles.²⁵ The parochial interest of nations will probably require that the corps headquarters, as well as all other formations, remains a national asset until chopped to NATO. Ideally, the corps would operate permanently under NATO control, but current attitudes on issues of sovereignty and national command are likely to prevail.

Although a national headquarters in peace, the corps should be

augmented with allied staff officers to establish a true integration of planning and execution. This augmentation would require two to three action officers (inclusive of senior non-commissioned officers where appropriate) for each primary or special staff section. This technique is used very effectively in U.S. Army Southern European Taskforce to facilitate binational operations even though it does not chop to NATO control for war. This concept should also strongly consider assigning a contingency position for an allied deputy corps commander upon chopping to NATO control. Any lesser commitment of resources will prove ineffective as staffs rotate after exercises and the chemistry of personal relationships dissolve. The augmentation must take place in each corps staff element. The multinational staff will become proficient through staff interaction and exercise. The national corps infrastructure will provide the nucleus of established systems, programs and procedures that will run the corps. Vital crosswalks are possible at the corps level for multinational and national assets that merge battlefield operating systems and national logistics systems.²⁶ An army's collective approach to warfare is evident in its employment of battlefield operating systems. These systems will not differ significantly among western armies, but the corps is the first level that can best rationalize and integrate their respective approaches to battle. Such approaches cannot be ad hoc or temporary.

Corps level combat support brigades provide an opportunity to expand the multinational complexion of the force. In corps

reinforcing or area missions, there is no inherent reason why functions of the corps combat support mission can be assigned to participating allied units. Using our model of augmenting a U.S. led corps with a German division, some German corps units-such as engineer, military police or air defense brigades-can (with necessary review and preplanning of capabilities) be integrated as a meaningful contribution to multinationalism. Assigning selected corps support missions to an allied brigade serves both a useful military and political purpose. Militarily, a single function support brigade can be easily assimilated into the overall scheme of tactical operations. For example, we recently witnessed the success of reserve component brigades which were assigned corps support missions in Desert Storm. Politically, assigning corps support missions to allied brigades has merit. The interest of the United States is served by reducing forward deployed force structure, which saves money. Allied interests are served by addressing societal pressures to lower the profile and justify the relevance of foreign armies.²⁷

Beneath the multinational corps, the structure and systems of the United States Army best accommodate the division as the national organizational cornerstone of a multinational corps. There are several arguments for this perspective. The pure national combat division offers habitual training relationships among brigades that are essential to an agile synchronous force. The national division also offers a single commander responsible both for training and fighting combined arms teams. In a multinational division, the commander would not control the

peacetime training and readiness status of an allied brigade that would be his to fight. National divisions also retain homogeneous battlefield operating systems at the pure tactical level of war. However, the division would not be a universal preference in NATO for the cornerstone of the corps. Several nations base their army force structure on the brigade. The challenge is to build flexibility in concept and structure. Our traditional mindset is the employment of corps to meet mid and high intensity conflict in Europe. However, the threat in Europe may not require the commitment of an entire corps to meet a crisis management need. This is where the flexibility of organizational structure is important. Crisis management may not require a division, but politically it is imperative that what ever size response force is chosen, it must be multinational in composition. Therefore, the United States, to be a full partner in multinational operations must be prepared and willing to contribute forces when less than a divisional structure is required.

e. An Alternative Corps Organization

The most active proposal to create a multinational corps has come from Belgium. The Belgian Army has proposed the formation of a Belgian Trinational Corps; it would consist of four Belgian brigades and a brigade from both Germany and the United States.²⁹ Interestingly, this six brigade corps does not provide for an intermediate divisional headquarters. The United States recently agreed in concept and has earmarked an active component CONUS based heavy separate brigade as its contribution to the force.

Discussions continue among the three nations to assess roles, responsibilities and mutual support responsibilities. These discussions are important as a first effort to hammer out multinational corps issues.

The Trinational Corps will provide a testbed to reach operational conclusions on this approach to organizational structure in a multinational corps. The brigade level approach to multinational formations is fundamental to several NATO countries that do not operate with divisional structures. The operational issues of operating a separate brigade in a multinational formation have been addressed. In the Belgian Corps, the U.S. brigade also assumes a significant logistical challenge. The heavy separate brigade is intended to function as an independent command, but under the umbrella of a U.S. COSCOM. While our allies can probably offer advice on the support of separate brigade operations, the complexity of support functions does not end with logistics. Belgium has already expressed an interest in U.S. units performing corps area missions.³⁰ Since the Trinational Corps does not have a divisional structure, any increase in combat forces necessitates an increase in combat support units. Therefore, the brigade must look to the corps for direct and general support units.

In addition to the unorthodox and cumbersome support problems presented to an American brigade, the brigade must be stationed in CONUS to meet the current formula for European strength ceiling. While modern wargaming and communications serve to simulate the experiences of field training exercises, training

rotations and the forming of habitual relationships with multinational partners will be a significant cost of doing business. If a brigade level solution is to be pursued, the United States should reevaluate the costs of assigning this mission to a European brigade.

IV. MULTINATIONAL INTEROPERABILITY

a. Standardization or Interoperability

The efficacy of multinationalism will reside in its ability to merge systems that support combat operations and the commander's decision-making cycle. Standardization and interoperability have been the subject of repeated debate and studies. Such deliberations are not unlike discussions that seek to improve intra-service operations in the armed forces of the United States. Since Operation Urgent Fury in Grenada, a major focus in the Department of Defense and the American Congress has been to rectify operational shortfalls in the joint environment. Our services have been guilty of carrying parochial views of the battlefield into the joint and combined arena. The magnitude of the issue emerged as the United States shifted its focus from Vietnam and discovered the massive modernization of forces across the Iron Curtain. Until the 1970s, the U.S. Army had for the most part been resistant to standardization. In fact, by 1975 the Culver-Nunn Amendment to the Defense Appropriations Bill directed the DOD to pursue standardization in NATO.³¹

Standardization is fundamentally defined as the use of common procedures, equipment, and doctrine. It should represent the best of all worlds in orchestrating the defense of Western Europe by sixteen separate nations. The benefits of standardization seem self-evident. But after twenty years of discussion, there is little likelihood it will blossom into the panacea that many hope for. Why is this? First, politicians want to spend defense dollars on domestic industries. Secondly, the arms industries of the Western world are very competitive and place an array of weaponry before governments seeking to modernize their forces. Lastly, the needs of every nation are not the same. Thus standardization might commit a given nation to a program of weapons purchases that may not meet their requirements or budget.³² Even so, some common items have been bought by several countries. This common purchasing is usually the result of a clear technological advantage. Or, as happens frequently in bilateral cases, negotiations establish a quid pro quo arrangement that return defense dollars to a domestic industry. However, some argue that standardization is tactically the wrong direction to take. Their point is twofold. First, it would be exorbitantly expensive for a foe to build systems to counter the threat presented in a wide array of nonstandardized equipments. Secondly, an adversary's tactical decision making process would be significantly compounded by the diversity of weapons, tactics, and technology that oppose him.

Beyond standardization, multinational forces should maximize the interoperability of systems. Interoperability basically

means making different systems work together. Often it is considered only in terms of designing physical interfaces to connect dissimilar equipment. This is important and represents the clearest example of achieving interoperability. Yet, is it the only consideration? Interoperability calls for a higher plane of understanding; it means multinational forces must accept differences in national cultures. This was aptly observed by General William J. Evans, a former Commander of Allied Air Forces Central Europe:

Interoperability really boils down to cooperation ...people working together...it may involve weapons or plans, tactics and procedures...but the most important aspect of interoperability is the attitude of the people involved.³³

Our European heritage provides a common baseline among NATO nations, but there are significant differences in national experiences and attitudes that affect our approach to the art and mechanics of war. Our collective task, as set forth by General Evans is to build understanding, not simply black boxes.

b. Four Pillars of Interoperability

Thus interoperability integrates better ways of doing business. It does not simply provide for universal standardization. How then can a multinational corps gain the advantage of interoperability. Based upon experiences in REFORGER 90, Brigadier General William J. Mullen, III, as Commander of the 1st Infantry Division (Forward), has identified training, doctrine, communications, and structure as the four pillars of interoperability.³⁴ He asserts they will underpin the viability of multinational forces. These pillars rest on one

foundation; the expectation that allies will learn each others' approach to war and the systems that support it.

As could be predicted, no pillar of multinational operations is more important than units that frequently train together. Multinational units must come together to train in peace as they will fight in war. There is no substitute for this kind of hands-on approach to learning and anticipating your ally. After 45 years of fielding American forces in Europe, the Army's focus has oriented on general defense positions in the geographic lanes of NATO's layer cake. Our Project Partnership Program continues to be positive effort, but it remains voluntary and is too often directed towards social functions and not operations. A multinational corps composed of national combat divisions helps mitigate the challenge, but does not remove it. Multinational forces must be trained to maneuver, fire and provide support functions for adjacent or attached allied units. This capability will be realized through commitment, organization, training standards and practice.³⁵

Europeans have a distinct advantage from recurring interaction with Americans that provide insights into our systems, doctrine and national character. In contrast, over a twenty year span of service, the typical American officer will serve between three and six years in Europe. In his career, the European officer will expand his horizons on multinational operations through frequent participation in NATO's annual series of autumn exercises and combined staff assignments. Also a far greater number of allied officers attend professional military education

(PME) in the United States than Americans do in foreign PME. This difference is not easy to equalize. Yet recognition of and commitment to multinational goals will put the Army on the path to recovery. Americans must do a better job of learning about their European allies. Such learning can be facilitated by increased second-language capabilities in our officer corps.

A multinational army needs a common understanding and baseline for doctrine. On the Airland battlefield, innovation and flexibility result from shared understanding of doctrinal basics.³⁶ This is where habitual relationships reinforce the doctrinal pillar. Although many aspects of doctrine are shared among nations, nations that are paired in multinational corps must clearly rationalize their doctrinal differences. In addition to the strictly doctrinal matters, the respective militaries must come to understand differences in command styles and staff processes. The German staff estimate/planning process depends largely on stylized information from which the commander gives guidance or makes decisions. The eventual operations order brief contains very short staff summaries but allocates half the briefing time for the commander to articulate intent. Interestingly, the German commander does not expect briefbacks from subordinate commanders on how they will achieve the superior's intent. In a style that would be welcomed by subordinate elements in the American Army, the Germans have a much more modest requirement for reporting detailed information to higher headquarters. While American units can accommodate this approach, German divisions may have the more difficult job

of adjusting to information requirements expected by an American lead corps.³⁷

Any discussion of interoperability highlights technical incompatibilities in communications. This is important and will be addressed later as part of command and control issues, but language is the primary issue. An alliance of sixteen nations using twelve languages poses a fundamental issue for multinational interoperability. While English and French may suffice as official languages at the upper echelons, neither is the language of most tactical operations centers. Thus the liaison team becomes critical in multinational operations. Interoperability will depend upon resourcing liaison teams with quality people and equipment. The Coalition forces relied heavily on liaison teams in the Gulf War. Their success in the Gulf War has helped imprint their necessity on another generation of leaders and planners. Compared with our allies, however, embarrassingly few Americans are proficient in a foreign language. Although this is obviously influenced by our geography, we have put too little emphasis on foreign language study in our entire educational system. Unfortunately, outside of specialized fields, the Army has not emphasized language training as an essential military skill. Thus our ability to interact in the multinational environment does not compare well with our allies abilities; they are more likely to have learned a second (and sometimes third) language in their formal educational systems..³⁸ Thus, our monolingual culture has not prepared us well for participation in a multinational force.

The last pillar is structure. The organizations that are brought together in the multinational environment must be compatible in structure. Specifically, a nation's contribution to a mixed force must provide support and C3 structure that equates to that of the other nations. If structures are not comparable, multinational forces either face a reduction in combat capabilities or an added responsibility to compensate for the missing structure.³⁹ This is less of an issue when considering the similar structures and capabilities of American and German divisions. However, it can be an issue to work if American units are combined with forces organized on a separate brigade structure. These brigade based structures are more self contained than American brigades (within a divisional structure) yet still look to corps units for many support functions. The multinational planners must therefore ensure an equity of capability between units or provide for the difference.

V. MULTINATIONAL COMMAND, CONTROL, AND COMMUNICATIONS

a. Command and Control

Command and Control extends the commander's authority and direction over his multinational corps to accomplish his mission. While this definition is not difficult to grasp, implementation of command and control is at the heart of what establishes warfare as an art and not a science. Every aspect of a multinational corps-especially its operations-will ultimately be tested in the viability and efficacy of its command and control

system. Far more than simply the ability to issues orders and receive reports, command and control involves the cognitive process which enables the commander to formulate and communicate his plan to achieve the objective. This paper does not seek to dissect the art of the command and control, but the processes needed to develop a centralized vision (intent) with decentralized execution is complex for every level of command. If this is a significant task in national commands, it is more complex as organizational boundaries are crossed between multinational partners. Forming the multinational corps on national divisions offers a significant command and control advantage. If national command and control systems operate within the division, the principal interface will be located between corps and division headquarters. Thus practiced national command and control systems can continue to operate in pure form within the division. A permanent combined corps staff and frequent exercises will refine subtleties and overt differences in form and style between approaches to command and control.

b. Command and Control Systems

Trusting that the nations will accommodate their respective approaches to the form and style of command and control processes; command, control and communication (C3) systems pose a larger problem to multinational forces. The assignment of a German division to an American lead multinational corps requires attention to interface German systems into the American command, control and communications architecture. This is the proper relationship since the corps should set the baseline for

architecture. Further, American C3 systems are more mature in the development of the Army Tactical Command and Control System (ATCCS). The ATCCS architecture links automated control systems for each of the Army's five battlefield functional areas (Maneuver, Fire Control, Air Defense, Intelligence and Service Support) between corps and battalion level. When fully fielded, ATCCS greatest impact will be its capability to share key elements of information that impact on the operation of the other functional area systems. The advantages are obvious, since current information will not be confined to stovepiped systems. As the staff plots the next operation, the readiness of each functional area to support combat operations will be available for planning.

The Army Tactical Command and Control System (ATCCS) is being constructed in view of a recognized need to interoperate with the command and control systems of other services and our allies.⁴⁰ While this need is recognized, it nonetheless presents a challenge. ATCCS must be able to achieve compatibility with a range of fielded or developmental systems of our allies. This will require modification to gain requisite compatibility. In fact, the maneuver control system of ATCCS has achieved interoperability through electronic gateways with British, French, and German command and control systems.⁴¹ Modifications are also moving towards interoperability of fire control systems, but the issue here is to get common technical characteristics for all future developments among the several nations. The basis for success will rest on open systems architecture among NATO nations

that will provide common standards of technical operation (physical connections and software) for C3 systems. NATO has long been involved with this quest for interoperability above the corps level. It must now look below corps to attain its true multinational objectives. In a very practical sense, very much in American interests, the architecture and technical leadership shown by ATCCS as a comprehensive command and control system should be pushed for adoption as the NATO open systems architecture for corps and below systems.

c. Communication Systems

Communications provide the lifeline of command and control systems. They must be technically as well as tactically integrated into multinational forces. The current status of communications compatibility is mixed. The communications architecture of the American corps will link battlefield functional area control systems of ATCCS over the common user communications networks of Mobile Subscriber Equipment (MSE), single channel combat net radio (CNR) and equipment specific data distribution systems. The three communications media provide the diversity and redundancy that will be critical to ensuring an acceptable reliability. Without delving into the black hole of technical characteristics, we need to discuss generic issues that impact these media and multinational operations.

The results of the Gulf War indicated good progress in achieving a high state of compatibility among the tactical common user networks of NATO forces. Even though they are not standardized systems, these high capacity systems represented by

American MSE, French and Belgian RITA, British Ptarmigan and German Autoko afford considerable interoperability but lack complete transparency of interaction. In laymen's terms, they can operate together but lacked their full potentials when interconnected. Gaining a high degree of electrical transparency will depend on the willingness of the respective governments to fund software modifications. The multinational corps might be the basis for some progress in this area.

The direction in single channel combat net radio is less promising in the near future. When technology offered a major step forward with jam resistant frequency hopping radios, the separate nations knowingly pursued different technical solutions that prohibited mutual compatibility. There are on going efforts to introduce backwards compatibility through interfacing devices, but the root issue rests in the inability of NATO to identify requirements and thus set a common standard. The only progress on single channel standards has been in the area of ultra high frequency aircraft radios. However, it is coming in an area with much less applicability to multinational land forces.⁴² While NATO waits for interface boxes and common standards, multinational compatibility in combat net radios relies on sufficient availability of common equipment for two nations (which is not likely) or surrendering the highly desirable features of detection resistant spread spectrum communications.

The third element of the communications architecture is the distributed data systems embedded in the Expanded Position Location Reporting System (EPLRS) and the Joint Tactical

Information Distribution System (JTIDS). These are powerful capabilities but are further from total fielding than the other two elements of the communications architecture. The multinational issue again is to develop a NATO position on requirements and standards for tactical data distribution systems. The interests of the United States are served by positioning EPLRS and JTIDS as standards for the development of similar systems by the different nations.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

The political-military architecture of Europe is being modified by dual forces of change and uncertainty. The security structures that have worked so well for so long must now change to adapt to the new security challenges facing Europe. As a proven institution of stability, NATO has sought to demonstrate its role and relevancy in the future of Europe. Central to this role will be a military posture that must meet varied expectations. Alliance forces must be smaller to meet fiscal and political realities but they will be expected to counter a wide array of uncertain scenarios. The emerging formula is to rely increasingly on multinational formations as a means to leverage savings but retain power.

As a creature born of political and not military necessity, the organizational concepts of a multinational corps will challenge agility and speed of decision at the tactical level of warfare. There will be pressure to create multinational units

quickly and declare political victory. The risk in this rush to respond to evolving conditions in Europe is that military considerations will lose out in the political and multinational arena. The formation of the multinational corps can not ignore how the organization can best fight. Battlefield operating systems and habitual training relationships make the combat division the logical building block to form an American based multinational corps. The environment of the modern battlefield provides a strong argument for the integrity of national division organizations. However, the organizational basis of a multinational corps must also consider nations that do not field divisional structures and a strong political interest to achieve deep multinational integration at the tactical level of war.

Even with the division as the cornerstone of the multinational corps, the task is still immense. Interoperability continues to be a problem. Interoperability cannot be achieved solely with money and standardized equipment, even if they were readily available. Interoperability has eluded NATO because solutions have been sought from the top and not at the working levels. Interoperability enables us to make different systems work together. The value of multinationalism may be to thrust this responsibility down to the operational level where ingenuity and common sense can do what no committee in Brussels could approach.

Although it could be viewed as a subset of interoperability, command and control has been addressed as a separate challenge. No aspect of successfully joining combat is as important as the communication of the commander's intent and the processes that

support it. Therefore, the architecture of command, control and communications systems is basic to the glue which will hold a multinational corps together. The German division that augments an American corps will have to fit into a robust architecture of functional battlefield control systems and communications to participate on a real time basis. This is not a ploy to promote American equipment for the German division, NATO must articulate common standards that provide a compatible baseline for all equipment in a network. NATO has worked this issue at the Army Group level and above, but it must now be worked at Corps and below in the multinational environment.

The multinational corps will be a fixture in the future of NATO. It can be done as a political expedient or it can be done to address military considerations. The challenge is on the leadership of NATO and the respective national military organizations to make the right choices. If it is not done right at the start, chances for recovering will be long in coming.

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